

Tips for being an Intertidal Detective

(Intertidal means between high tide and low tide)

- If the tide is rising, be sure to explore the lowest intertidal zone first!
- If the tide is falling, you can work your way down!
- Look underneath seaweeds, a great place for animals to stay moist and hide while the tide is out. Shake the ends of a clump of seaweed into a bucket.
- Look under rocks and in small crevices, making sure that rocks are *returned to their original position* in order to protect the animals that live there.
- Observe tide pools and shallow water *carefully* before reaching or stepping in to explore. Animals scoot away when the water is disturbed, and sediment gets stirred up, making it hard to see!

Observing and Handling Intertidal Animals

- Before handling, observe animals without disturbing them. You will often see more action if you look and don't touch, or wait and watch.
- Animals should be picked up gently and held in the palm of the hand (except for crabs).
- Never pry or pull an animal that is clinging to a rock or other surface.
- Some shells are easily broken. Sea stars and sea urchins tube feet can be torn. Always be *slow* and *gentle*!
- Keep animals underwater as much as possible; use small buckets with fresh sea water.
- Try to find as many *different* animals as possible. Don't collect a lot of the same animal.
- *Remember* where each animal was collected. They should be returned to the *same location* where they were found. If you can't remember (it happens!), at least return to the proper intertidal zone area.